

Pacific Power offers ‘blue skies,’ ranks high in renewable energy sales

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PORTLAND, Ore. – Pacific Power recently announced that they rank second in the nation in the number of customers buying renewable power, and fourth for green power sales volume for 2006.

Pacific Power received these rankings due in large part to their Blue Sky renewable energy program, which customers may choose to participate in.

“Blue Sky is a voluntary program we offer our customers as a way for them to participate in renewable energy production across the region,” said Pacific Power spokesperson Bekki Witt.

Through the program, customers may choose to purchase wind-energy in 100 kilowatt-hour (kwh) increments called “blocks.”

Though these customers aren’t directly served by windfarms, Witt said, the funds raised by selling these blocks go toward purchasing or building new renewable energy sources.

“This program is voluntary, and it can cost a little bit extra,” Witt said. “But when it’s of importance to a customer, they show that commitment and sign up.”

Currently, more than 28,000 of Pacific Power’s 713,000 customers in Washington, Oregon, and California participate in the program.

California state regulations and goals may be shifting corporate outlook about renewable resources.

In 2003, the California Energy Commission and the California Public Utilities Commission along with the Consumer Power and Conservation Financing Authority approved an “Energy Action Plan” (EAP) that set goals regarding California’s energy use.

A second EAP was prepared in September of 2005.

EAP II states that “California can reduce its greenhouse gas emissions, moderate its increasing dependence on natural gas, and mitigate the associated risks of electricity price volatility by aggressively developing renewable energy resources to meet the Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) requirements.”

Currently the RPS requires that 20 percent of electricity sales come from renewable sources by the year 2017.

“Our company has been committed to the environment throughout our history,” Witt said. “Renewable energy is something the company does promote and believe in.” Pacific Power, a division of PacifiCorp, operates in Oregon, Washington, and California.

The Blue Sky program is also available to PacifiCorp’s Rocky Mountain Power customers in Utah, Wyoming, and Idaho.

As of Dec. 31, 2006, the company had over 52,000 customers enrolled in the program in those six states.